

# **Riverside Drive Reconstruction Consultation Report**

February, 2017



## **Introduction**

The intent of the Riverside Drive Reconstruction project is to reconstruct Riverside Drive from South Kingsway to Brule Gardens in order to bring it to a state of good repair, and to install one sidewalk along the length of the street. This project was initiated by Transportation Services and is being carried out by Engineering and Construction Services.

The project team conducted survey and inventory work in 2015, and completed a tree inventory in early 2016. Initial design work began in 2015 and continued in 2016.

The goal of the consultation process was to gather feedback from the local community on the proposed design and share information about the reconstruction plan. The City received a number of inquiries and comments about the project before the initiation of the consultation process. City staff established a project webpage ([www.toronto.ca/riversidedrive](http://www.toronto.ca/riversidedrive)) and held two Public Open Houses in 2016 (the first in February and the second in April). This document summarizes these events, the feedback received, and the project team's responses.

**Public Open House #1**  
February 25, 2016, 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
Swansea Town Hall, 95 Lavinia Avenue

The first Public Open House was held on Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at Swansea Town Hall.



### **Notification**

Local residents were notified of the Public Open House through the following methods:

- An "Open House & Pre-Construction Notice" was sent to residents of Riverside Drive, Riverside Crescent, Riverside Trail, Brule Crescent, Brule Gardens, Mossom Place, and Mossom Road through Canada Post direct mail on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Information about the Open House was posted on the project website, along with all display panels and related documents: [www.toronto.ca/riversidedrive](http://www.toronto.ca/riversidedrive)
- The Public Open House was listed on the City of Toronto's central "Get Involved" online consultation event calendar: [www.toronto.ca/involved](http://www.toronto.ca/involved)
- Notices were sent via email to the project email list
- Notice was provided to Councillor Doucette's office

### **Attendees**

Sixty-Five (65) people signed in to the Public Open House, and some attended but chose not to sign in.

### **Project Team Members in Attendance**

- Raffi Bedrosyan, Engineering & Construction Services
- Aziz Haque, Project Manager, Engineering & Construction Services
- Robert Cappello, Engineering & Construction Services
- Fiona Chapman, Transportation Services
- Bruce Clayton, Transportation Services
- Patrick Cheung, Toronto Water
- Kate Nelischer, Public Consultation Unit
- Mae Lee, Public Consultation Unit
- Lynn Collins, Candevcon Ltd.
- Domenic Ditata, Candevcon Ltd.
- Hammad Khan, Candevcon Ltd.
- Henry Kortekaas, HKA Inc.
- Ryan Paliga, HKA Inc.

Councillor Doucette and Constituency Assistant Katherine Trimble were also in attendance, along with MPP Cheri DiNovo.

### **Information Displayed**

The first Public Open House focused on sharing the preliminary design for the reconstruction of Riverside Drive and gathering feedback from the community. The following information panels were displayed at the Public Open House and can be found on the project webpage:

- Welcome and Project Description
- Goals of this Open House
- Project Timeline
- Project Team and Responsibilities
- Neighbourhood Context
- What We've Heard To Date
- Traffic Calming Measures for Consideration
- Geotechnical Investigation
- Low-Impact Development Design (LID)
- Typical Proposed Road Cross-Sections
- Why Sidewalks?
- Tree Inventory and Preservation Measures
- Preliminary Plant List
- Preliminary Landscape Overview
- Preliminary Landscape Layout
- Retaining Wall Design
- Noise and Vibration
- Next Steps

### **Feedback Requested**

Participants were invited to ask questions and offer comments about the project in general, but the project team was also specifically seeking responses to the following questions, which were included in the comment card provided during the Public Open House and on the project webpage:

- What are the benefits of the preliminary design?
- Do you have any concerns regarding the preliminary design?
- Are there any special considerations in relation to your property that the City should be aware of?
- Do you have any additional comments?

### **Public Comments**

The project team was pleased to receive many comments and questions both at the Public Open House and afterwards via phone and email. This feedback came in the following forms:

- Forty-Four (44) comment cards submitted by the March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 deadline
- Over 38 comments were submitted separately via email or phone by March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Staff spoke with attendees and recorded notes

Many of the participants responded positively to the City's intention to reconstruct Riverside Drive and bring the street to a state of good repair. There was concern over the implementation of a standard sidewalk and its possible impacts on the existing character of the street, nearby

trees, and private landscape features. Some residents expressed a desire for a woonerf or "shared street" design that would include permeable pavers throughout the road cross section. Other residents were concerned about design changes restricting traffic movement along the street. Many noted that they feel Riverside Drive experiences high volumes of vehicular traffic and speeding.

Below is an overview of key comments received, and the project team's subsequent responses. Many comments were received from homeowners that related to their individual properties, which have not been included here.

<b>Summary of Comments</b>	<b>City Response</b>
<p>Speeding and traffic volume are problems. Suggested causes of speeding included: long sightlines, long block length, wide road with and perceived road width, drivers using Riverside Drive as a by-pass during the morning and evening rush hours, and the merge lane at South Kingsway.</p> <p>Support for narrowing the road to protect existing trees.</p> <p>Support for and opposition to the centre painted line.</p>	<p>The City modified the roadway design, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road narrowed from 8.5-9.5 metres to 6-7.2 metres</li> <li>• Added pinch points with pavers</li> <li>• Added alternating 3-hour anytime on-street parking</li> <li>• Raised the intersection at Riverside Drive and Riverside Trail and designed with pavers</li> <li>• Utilized landscaping at specific locations to narrow the field of view</li> <li>• Modified the South Kingsway and Riverside Drive intersection by replacing the yield and channel lane at with a full stop and extending the curb to both visually and physically reduce the access point to and from Riverside Drive and slow vehicles</li> </ul>
<p>Concern about limited visibility at Mossom Road and Riverside Drive intersection.</p>	<p>The City modified the Mossom Road and Riverside Drive intersection by replacing the painted line markings with a rolled curb and landscaping.</p>
<p>Concern about the potential noise that rumble strips could cause.</p>	<p>The City omitted rumble strips from the design.</p>
<p>Desire for bicycle lanes.</p>	<p>Riverside Drive is designated as a 'local road' which is considered low volume and low speed. The Ontario Traffic Manual concludes providing dedicated cycling areas to protect cyclists from traffic on local roads is not critical. Additionally, the proposed 6-7.2 metres roadway could only accommodate 1 metre edge lines for bike lanes, below the minimum requirement for safe bike lanes.</p> <p>Within the broader neighbourhood the City is exploring options for improving the existing Ellis/Runnymede cycling route, with upgrades to the Lake Shore Crossing, a section of bike lane, and new markings.</p>

Interest in new storm sewers and reducing run-off.	To reduce the quantity and improve the quality of runoff from the street into the existing storm system and ultimately into Humber River, City staff considered the feasibility and use of: bio-retention cells, infiltration trenches, and permeable pavers at strategic locations along the roadway to take advantage of favourable soil conditions.
Support for sidewalks to increase pedestrian safety.	A refined sidewalk design remains in the plan.
Why does Riverside Drive need a sidewalk?	<p>The City's practice is to build sidewalks on at least one side of a roadway during reconstruction. Sidewalks promote walkability, enhance pedestrian safety and comfort, and improve accessibility. This project provides a once in 100 year, cost effective opportunity to improve the street by implementing a sidewalk and further expanding the City's pedestrian network.</p> <p>City staff considered input received regarding constructing a woonerf and determined the application is not appropriate for Riverside Drive. However, in response to input received staff proposed significant modifications to the original proposed plans, where feasible taking elements of the woonerf design into consideration, including lowering the sidewalk and using a rolled curb rather than the City's standard barrier curb.</p> <p>Pedestrian safety is a concern for City staff. Pedestrians are vulnerable road users without the benefit of having protection when not on a sidewalk, a rolled curb provides a physical separation, making it difficult for vehicles to mount and potentially collide with a pedestrian.</p> <p>Curbs discourage vehicles from illegally parking and stopping on the sidewalk surface. Illegal parking on the sidewalk could result in pedestrians having to walk on the road surface to negotiate around illegally parked cars.</p> <p>A landscaped boulevard of mixed materials between the rolled curb and sidewalk was introduced in response to comments received from residents, who favoured a boulevard instead of designing the sidewalk against the edge of the curb.</p>

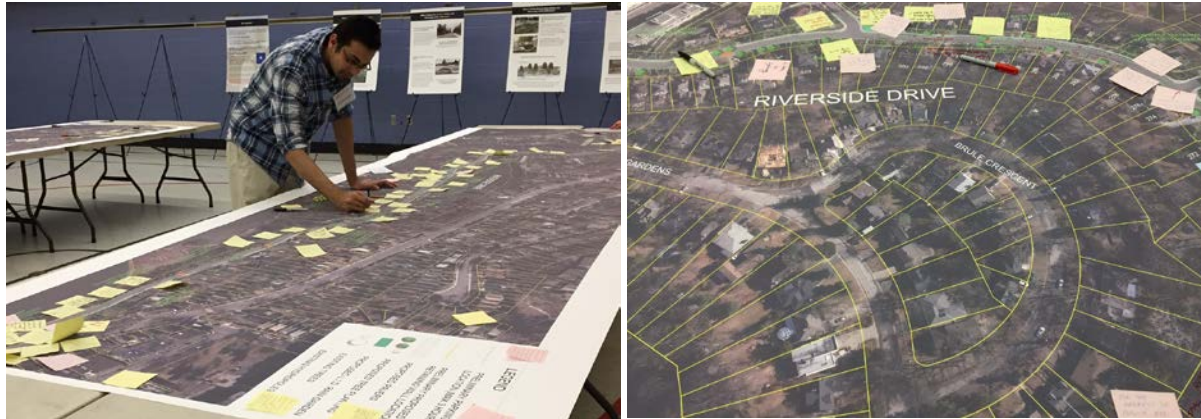
<p>Prefer "walkways" at the same level as the roadway to traditional sidewalks, in keeping with a "woonerf" concept and to not significantly alter the existing character of the street.</p>	<p>The City modified the standard sidewalk design, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using a modified rolled curb instead of a traditional barrier curb to lower the road profile</li> <li>• Introducing a 1.2 metres landscaped and grassed boulevard to allow for tree planting</li> </ul>
<p>Opposition to a concrete sidewalk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current City standard for local streets such as Riverside Drive is to use concrete for sidewalks</li> <li>• The City is developing 'Green Streets Technical Guidelines' which are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2017</li> <li>• The City will wait until the Guidelines are in place to assess all issues and opportunities (including initial costs, lifecycle costs, maintenance and operations considerations, and other factors), and to decide on a sidewalk material</li> </ul>
<p>Desire for sidewalk to be placed on the west side of the street to align with the lookout over the Humber River.</p>	<p>The City is planning for a sidewalk on the east side of the street for a number of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are more homes on the east side of the street</li> <li>• Existing lighting is on the east side of the street, increasing safety for pedestrians</li> <li>• The west side of Riverside Drive along the retaining wall does not provide sufficient space to construct a sidewalk</li> <li>• A sidewalk on the east side of the street will connect with the existing sidewalk at the south end of the road</li> <li>• A sidewalk on the west side of the street would require pedestrians to make additional road crossings (at Riverside Crescent, and north and south of Lucy Maud Montgomery Park)</li> </ul>

<p>Concern about potential impacts to trees.</p>	<p>The City is committed to minimizing any potential impacts to trees. The project team has and will further consider during detailed design a number of measures to minimize removal and negative impacts to trees, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimizing the roadway and sidewalk widths and shifting the sidewalk within the boulevard</li> <li>• Localized shifting of the road</li> <li>• Lowering or raising the road and proposing a rolled curb to minimize grading</li> <li>• Identifying transplanting opportunities</li> <li>• Locating infiltration trenches away from tree roots</li> </ul> <p>Prior to, during and after construction, the City may further protect tree health through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crown and root pruning, fertilization and irrigation</li> <li>• Use of alternative road materials</li> <li>• Use of alternative construction techniques such as hand digging and root protection to preserve tree root structure</li> <li>• Pruning of trees prior to construction to maintain health</li> </ul>
<p>Concern about possible impacts to private infrastructure (for example, planting beds, retaining walls, and walkways).</p>	<p>Some private features exist within the public road allowance. These features, such as retaining walls or sprinkler systems, may require relocation. The City is working to minimize any disturbance to these features. Homeowners will be consulted prior to construction if removal or relocation is required.</p>
<p>Concern over the proposed placement and maintenance of some Low Impact Design plantings.</p>	<p>The location of some LIDs has been shifted to accommodate adjacent landowners.</p>



**Public Open House #2**  
April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 6:30pm – 8:30pm  
St. Pius X Catholic School, 71 Jane Street

The second Public Open House was held on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at St. Pius X Catholic School.



### Notification

Local residents were notified of the Public Open House through the following methods:

- An "Open House Notice" was sent to residents of Riverside Drive, Riverside Crescent, Riverside Trail, Brule Crescent, Brule Gardens, Mossom Place, and Mossom Road through direct mail on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Information about the Open House was posted on the project website, along with all panels and reports: [www.toronto.ca/riversidedrive](http://www.toronto.ca/riversidedrive)
- The Public Open House was listed on the City of Toronto's central "Get Involved" online consultation event calendar: [www.toronto.ca/involved](http://www.toronto.ca/involved)
- Notices were sent via email to the project email list
- Notice was provided to Councillor Doucette's office

### Attendees

One Hundred-Eight (108) people signed in to the Public Open House, and some attended but chose not to sign in.

### Project Team Members in Attendance

- Raffi Bedrosyan, Engineering & Construction Services
- Aziz Haque, Project Manager, Engineering & Construction Services
- Robert Cappello, Engineering & Construction Services
- Daphne Wee, Transportation Services
- Justin Bak, Transportation Services
- Bruce Clayton, Transportation Services
- Patrick Cheung, Toronto Water
- Tracy Manolakakis, Public Consultation Unit
- Kate Nelischer, Public Consultation Unit
- Robyn Shyllit, Public Consultation Unit
- Lynn Collins, Candevcon Ltd.
- Domenic Ditata, Candevcon Ltd.

- Hammad Khan, Candevcon Ltd.
- Henry Kortekaas, HKA Inc.
- Ryan Paliga, HKA Inc.

Councillor Doucette and Constituency Assistant Katherine Trimble were also in attendance.

### **Information Displayed**

The second Public Open House focused on sharing the revised design for the reconstruction of Riverside Drive and gathering feedback from the community. The following information panels were displayed at the Public Open House and can be found on the project webpage:

- Welcome and Project Description
- Project Team and Responsibilities
- Neighbourhood Context
- What We've Heard to Date
- Key Points
- Why Sidewalks?
- What is Being Done to Slow Vehicles and Discourage Traffic Infiltration?
- Typical Proposed Road Cross-Sections
- Retaining Wall Design
- Tree Inventory & Preservation Measures
- Noise and Vibration
- Proposed Timing and Next Steps

### **Feedback Requested**

Participants were invited to ask questions and offer comments about the project in general, but the project team was also specifically seeking responses to the following questions, which were included in the comment card provided during the Public Open House:

- What are the benefits of the revised design?
- Do you have any concerns regarding the revised design?
- Are there any special considerations in relation to your property that the City should be aware of?
- Do you have any additional comments?

### **Public Comments**

The project team was pleased to receive many comments and questions both at the Public Open House and afterwards via phone and email. This feedback came in the following forms:

- Thirty-Five (35) comment cards submitted by May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 deadline
- Sixty-Three (63) comments were submitted separately via email or phone
- Staff spoke with attendees and recorded notes

Many of the participants responded positively to the City's revised design for Riverside Drive. There was particular support for the non-traditional sidewalk design, the narrowed road, and the shifting of LID placements. There was concern over the proposed changes to the merge lane at Riverside Drive and South Kingsway, and some supported a woonerf or "shared street" design.

Below is an overview of key comments received, and the project team's subsequent responses. Many comments were received from homeowners that related to their individual properties, which have not been included here.

<b>Summary of Comments</b>	<b>City Response</b>
Desire to reduce the speed limit along Riverside Drive.	On January 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2017 the Etobicoke Community Council approved a motion put forward by Councillor Doucette to reduce the speed limit on Riverside Drive from 40km/h to 30km/h.
Interest in adding speed humps and stop signs to slow traffic.	<p>The roadway is designed to slow traffic through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrowing of pavement from 8.5-9.5 metres to 6-7.2 metres</li> <li>• Creation of a raised intersection with pavers at Riverside Drive and Riverside Trail</li> <li>• Addition of pavers at the intersection of Riverside Drive and Mossom Place</li> <li>• Narrowing the intersection at Riverside Drive and Mossom Road with an extended landscaped boulevard to reduce cut-through traffic going the wrong direction and create a visual cue to slow traffic entering Riverside Drive</li> <li>• Inclusion of on-street parking to further narrow the roadway and create additional visual cues to slow traffic</li> <li>• Addition of a variety of landscaping material including trees, shrubs and grasses to add visual interest and narrow the field of view</li> </ul>
Many people expressed a desire to keep intersection at South Kingsway and Riverside Drive as-is so as to not slow vehicles merging onto South Kingsway and cause a traffic back-up on Riverside Drive. Some supported the proposed new design.	The City has kept the existing intersection design. Minor adjustments will be made to signage, curbs, and pavement markings.
Will permeable pavers and LID plantings be maintained?	Maintenance of the boulevard will be the responsibility of the adjacent homeowner. Where the plantings are within parks, the maintenance will be the responsibility of the City.
Will sidewalks be cleared of snow by the City?	Yes, Riverside Drive will receive snow clearing on the new sidewalk.
Suggestion to include pedestrian crossings at the north and south ends of Lucy Maud Montgomery Park.	A pinch point with permeable pavers is included directly in front of Lucy Maud Montgomery Park, which will support pedestrian movement.
Suggestion to only use native plants in the LIDs.	The project landscape architects will select plants that are appropriate to the local soil and growing conditions, and aligned with the City's approved plant list.
Will the road alignment be shifted west to accommodate for the sidewalk on the east side?	The roadway will be narrowed and shifted slightly west to maintain the existing centreline.

Concern that pedestrians will continue to walk on the west side of the street at the retaining wall to take in the view, even without a sidewalk.	The City will include a narrow concrete strip along the west side of the street in the area of the retaining wall.
Desire to shift the proposed pinch point in front of the retaining wall slightly so as to avoid placement directly in front of houses.	The City has shifted the pinch point accordingly.
Concern that drivers do not recognize Mossom Road as a one-way street.	The City will replace the line painting at Mossom Road with a raised landscaped area to reduce cut-through going the wrong direction and create a visual cue to slow traffic entering Riverside Drive
What will the parking restrictions be?	City staff are planning 3-hr anytime on-street parking at specific locations along Riverside Drive. Parking spaces are planned in alternating banks to help create breaks in the sight lines of the street and narrow the roadway to encourage reduced speeds.
Will Lucy Maud Montgomery Park be impacted?	There are temporary impacts anticipated during construction, such as access to the park. In addition there are proposed LID features to be constructed within the park. The installation of these features will create temporary access issues.
Will the watermain and sanitary sewer be replaced?	Generally, the City has determined the watermains are in good condition and do not require replacement. The exceptions are the watermain and a piece of the sanitary sewer adjacent to the retaining wall as they conflict with the reconstruction of the retaining wall. There are no plans to replace the sewers during this reconstruction effort.
How will stormwater be managed?	Stormwater will be managed through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction of modified rolled curbs and gutters to convey stormwater flows efficiently to the existing stormwater sewer</li> <li>• Low Impact Development (LID) measures such as rain gardens and bio-retention swales will provide enhanced water quality</li> <li>• Permeable pavers at the pinch point in front of Lucy Maud Montgomery Park</li> </ul>
How will driveways and private walkways be connected to the redesigned street?	The City will connect private walkways to the newly reconstructed street.
Desire to extend the no right turn restrictions from Bloor Street West to Riverside Drive.	Staff recommended that the existing "No Right Turn, 7:00am to 9:00am, Monday to Friday" regulation for eastbound traffic on Bloor St. W. at Riverside Drive be extended to 7:00am – 9:30am. This was approved by Council in December, 2016.

<p>Are pinch points dangerous for cyclists?</p>	<p>The proposed design has been reviewed by Transportation Services, and staff have agreed it is safe for all users.</p>
<p>Will the new design be monitored for potential problems?</p>	<p>The street will be monitored after implementation, including the impacts of permeable pavers to assess their effectiveness.</p>
<p>What is the construction timeline?</p>	<p>The preliminary construction is as follows (but is subject to change):</p> <p><b>Phase 1</b> - The retaining wall and adjacent watermain will be replaced. This Phase is anticipated to commence in early 2017 take approximately 6-8 months to complete.</p> <p><b>Phase 2</b> – The reconstruction of the entire length of Riverside Drive. This Phase is anticipated to commence in the Summer of 2017 and take approximately 6 - 7 months to complete. There is no watermain or sewer replacement anticipated for this phase of the project. Planting and sodding will likely be done in Spring 2018.</p>